issues broadly relate to the inequities and imbalances in the WTO agreements, non-realisation of anticipated benefits and the non-operational and non-binding nature of most of the Special and Differential (S and D) provisions in favour of developing countries.These issues were highlighted by India through its proposals which were cosponsored by 11 other like-minded group of countries in the preparatory process leading to Seattle Ministerial Conference. After the Doha Ministerial Conference these issues have become an integral part of the WTO Work Programme. India's concerns in the case of WTO Agreement on Agriculture were also flagged in its negotiating proposals submitted to WTO. The Indian proposals aim at protecting its food and livelihood security and for creating opportunities for export of its agricultural surpluses while targeting the high tariffs and trade distorting domestic support and export subsidies of the developed countries.

As a follow up to the Doha Ministerial Declaration and the run up to the scheduled Ministerial Conference in Mexico in 2003, the Government have already undertaken wide ranging consultations with the State Governments and other stake holders for finalising its negotiating strategy.

Removal of TBT on import of steel

638. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) Whether a large section of industry has represented him for removal of Technical Barriers on Trade (TBT) imposed on the imports of Steel products *vide* DGFT Notification No. 44 since non-availability of the requisite grades of Steel has severely hit the industry;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry of Law to whom a reference was made by the Ministry of Commerce has also opined that the inclusion of Steel products in the DGFT Notification is no tenable since the conditions imposed on the Foreign Producers are not applicable to the Indian Producers; and

(c) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) Paragraph 2.2 of

Export and Import Policy (2002-2007) provides that all imported goods shall also be subject to domestic laws, rules, orders, regulations, technical specifications, environmental and safety norms as applicable on domestically produced goods. Accordingly, import of steel products has been made subject to compliance of mandatory Indian Quality Standards as applicable to like domestic goods vide DGFT Notification 44 dated 24.11.2000.

The standards in respect of steel items are applicable on domestic producers under Ministry of Steel and Mines, Department of Iron and Steel, Notifications dated 4.1.1965 and 26.3.1971.

Representations are received from trade and industry from time to time for removal/review of all such restrictions, which are imposed under para 2.2 of Export and Impoart Policy, the restrictions are reviewed periodically and all such representations are taken note of in consultation with concerned administrative Ministries during review as also the Ministry of Law wherever legal issues are raised. In the case of steel products, the Ministry of Law, to whom the representations were referred, has opined that it is also possible to take a view that the notifications dated 4.1.65 and 26.3.71 were not mandatory in character.

Trade Policy review body of WTO

639. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Trade Policy Review Body of WTO conducts review of trade policies of countries on a rgular basis;

(b) if so, whether any review has been conducted for India so far;

(c) if so, the findings thereof; and

(d) the action taken by Indian in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Yes, Sir. The trade polices and practices of all the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Members